

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Population and Growth

Bellevue's population was almost 110,000 in the year 2000, which enhanced the City's status as the major urban population center on the Eastside.

Bellevue's population grew 26.1 percent between 1990 and 2000 to 109,569 persons. Bellevue's status as the most populous city in King County's Eastside coupled with the growth of Eastside relative to Seattle enhances Bellevue's role in the Puget Sound region. With the recent annexation of West Lake Sammamish, Bellevue's population rose to an estimated 117,000 in 2002.

Not counting increases due to annexations, Bellevue's population during the 1990s grew at a slower rate than the overall population in King County.

The most rapid growth in King County has been outside traditional population centers. The pattern is seen at many levels within the county. The Eastside and South King County grew faster than Seattle did. King County cities to the east of Bellevue also grew more quickly than Bellevue.

When Bellevue reaches the extent of its Potential Annexation Area, population growth in the city will likely slow substantially.

Annexation has accounted for more than half of the City's population growth since incorporation, and made up about half of Bellevue's population growth between 1990 and 2000. With only a small fraction of Bellevue's potential annexation area left to be annexed, the growth in the number of Bellevue residents is likely to slow substantially in the future.

Household and Age Characteristics

Average household size in Bellevue continued to decline in the 1990s as one-person households increased more quickly than households did overall.

Bellevue's average household size went from 2.41 persons per household in 1990 to 2.37 in 2000. This was a continuation of the trend in the previous few decades of decreasing household sizes both locally and nationally (although the rate of decline in the 1990s was relatively minor compared to that in the 1970s). Reflecting this general trend, in Bellevue the number of one-person households increased faster than the number of households generally between 1990 and 2000.

In the 1990s, the number of children in Bellevue grew at about the same rate as Bellevue's population as a whole, with children continuing to comprise a little over one-fifth of Bellevue residents.

However, the rate of growth across childhood age groups was not even. The numbers of children age 5 to 14 increased at a rate greater than Bellevue's population as a whole while the numbers of older teens and young children did not grow as fast as the rest of the city's population.

Household and Age Characteristics *(continued)*

In the year 2000, the percentage of households with children was lower in Bellevue than in the remainder of the Eastside and King County as a whole, but much higher than in Seattle.

Within King County, those cities that are closer to Seattle generally had a smaller proportion of households with children than did those cities further to the east and south.

In the year 2000, young working-age adults were a smaller part of the population in Bellevue than in the county as a whole.

While about two-thirds of Bellevue residents were of working age (19-64 years of age) in 2000, Bellevue had a lower percentage of workers age 19 to 44 than did the county as a whole and all of the other King County comparison cities studied in this report. Furthermore, in Bellevue and the remainder of the Eastside, the number of residents in their early 20s actually declined slightly.

The proportion of Bellevue's population comprised of seniors increased between 1990 and 2000.

The proportion of the population aged sixty-five and above went from about 10 percent to about 13 percent. Of the geographies studied for this report (including the nation, state, county, and selected comparison cities in King County), Bellevue had the highest increase in the percentage of the population comprised of seniors. By 2000, Bellevue had also eclipsed both the nation and these other geographies in the percentage of the population made up of seniors. Though they make up a small part of the population, those 75 years of age and older were the fastest growing age group in Bellevue, growing at a rate more than four times as fast as the general population in the city.

Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Bellevue was much more racially diverse in 2000 than ten years before.

In the 2000 Census, almost 26 percent of Bellevue residents identified themselves as a race other than White (or White in combination with another race or races). The comparability of race data between 1990 and 2000 is limited by changes to race questions on the Census questionnaires and by the fact that outreach to minority residents was more thorough in 2000. However, there is no question about the trend of Bellevue's increasing diversity given the magnitude of the increase (from 14 percent who identified themselves as a race other than White on the 1990 census).

The 2000 Census also revealed that Bellevue was significantly more diverse than the balance of the Eastside and somewhat more diverse than King County and the nation as a whole.

With over a quarter of residents identifying themselves as a non-White race (or White in combination with another race or races), Bellevue is also more racially diverse than its largest neighbors on the Eastside.

In the year 2000, the Asian population made up over two thirds of Bellevue's non-White population. Asians were also the most rapidly growing racial category in Bellevue in the 1990s.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of residents in Bellevue who are Asian/Pacific Islander more than doubled. This group comprised over 17 percent of the city's population in 2000. The largest population within the Asian/Pacific Islander category was Chinese, followed by Asian Indian, Japanese, and Korean. Asian Indians were the group among these four Asian subpopulations that grew the most rapidly in the 1990s.

Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality *(continued)*

Bellevue's Hispanic and Latino population also increased rapidly between 1990 and 2000.

Residents of Bellevue identifying themselves as having Hispanic or Latino ethnicity increased from 2.3 percent of the population in 1990 to 5.3 percent of the city's population in 2000. It should be noted that the Census asks about Hispanic/Latino ethnicity separately from race and that Hispanics and Latinos can identify themselves as any race.

The White and African American populations in Bellevue grew in the 1990s, but at slower rates than the city's overall population.

Whites represented 74.3 percent of Bellevue's population in 2000. African Americans constituted 2 percent of the city's population, which was the about the same percentage as in 1990.

Bellevue's foreign-born population increased substantially between 1990 and 2000: in 1990 about 1 in 8 residents (13.3 percent) were foreign-born; in 2000 about 1 in 4 (24.5 percent) were foreign-born.

While the overall population of Bellevue grew by about 26 percent between 1990 and 2000, the numbers of foreign-born residents grew by over 100 percent. The 2000 Census revealed that over half of Bellevue's foreign-born were recent immigrants. Almost 90 percent who identified themselves as recent immigrants were born in Asia, Europe, or Mexico.

The percentage of Bellevue residents born in another country is much higher than the county average, and higher than all other cities in King County except Tukwila.

Bellevue also had the highest number of recent immigrants to the U.S. of any city in the state outside of Seattle.

The number and percent of Bellevue residents who speak a language at home other than English rose substantially between 1990 and 2000.

While the total population of the city increased by 26 percent, the number of Bellevue residents (5 years of age and older) who speak a language at home other than English increased 149 percent. Of all Bellevue residents 5 years of age and older, 26.9 percent spoke a language at home other than English in 2000.

Of Bellevue residents who speak a language other than English, almost half reported that they speak English less than "very well."

This represents over 12 percent of all Bellevue residents aged 5 and older, or over 12,000 total city residents. Furthermore, Bellevue has over 3,000 households that are "linguistically isolated," meaning that all members in those households over the age of 14 speak English less than very well.

Economic Characteristics

Bellevue adults are highly educated, and increasingly so.

The percentage of Bellevue residents 25 years of age or older with at least a bachelor's degree rose from 46 percent in 1990 to 54 percent in 2000. Bellevue's proportion of adults who had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2000 is greater than the percentages in Seattle, King County as a whole, and the balance of the Eastside.

Economic Characteristics *(continued)*

Bellevue's median household income grew at a lower rate than inflation between 1989 and 1999, though incomes in Bellevue remained high relative to those in the region and the state.

Data on 1999 incomes from the 2000 Census show that Bellevue had one of the highest median household incomes in King County, the region and the state of Washington. However, between 1989 and 1999, both median household income and median family income in Bellevue rose at a rate that was lower than inflation. At the same time, Bellevue's *per capita* income rose at a rate higher than inflation.

The percentages in Bellevue of individuals and families with 1999 incomes below poverty level were lower than in King County and the nation as a whole.

The Census counted 6,162 Bellevue residents, or 5.7 percent of the population, with 1999 incomes falling below poverty. The poverty rate was somewhat lower for families. Poverty rates for some segments of the population, such as families with children headed by a single female, were much higher.

Labor force participation by Bellevue residents declined between 1990 and 2000.

In 2000, Bellevue had a smaller percent of overall population in the labor force than did other nearby jurisdictions. This may partially be due to trends in the percentage of Bellevue residents over age 65, which grew between 1990 and 2000, and—by 2000—was higher than that in many other jurisdictions in the region.

A large and growing proportion of employed Bellevue residents work in management or professional occupations.

The number and percentage of employed Bellevue residents in management or professional occupations rose from about 40 percent in 1990 to about 53 percent in 2000. Bellevue—and eastside cities generally—have a higher percentage of the labor force in management, professional, and related occupations than do other cities in King County.

Housing and Residential Patterns

About 61 percent of households in Bellevue lived in owner-occupied housing in 2000.

This proportion was slightly higher than the 58 percent of households that lived in owner-occupied housing in 1990. The percentage of households in owner-occupied housing in Bellevue continued to be higher than in Seattle but lower than in the balance of the Eastside.

In Bellevue, single-unit attached structures (townhouses), 20- or more unit multifamily structures, and studios were the types of housing with the most rapid increases in the 1990s.

While townhouses and studio units continued to represent relatively small proportions of the overall housing stock, the increase in their numbers was dramatic: 80 percent and 170 percent respectively. This compares to an overall increase of 29 percent for units in all housing types.

Housing and Residential Patterns *(continued)*

During the 1990s, the median value for owner-occupied housing in Bellevue did not increase as quickly as in King County as a whole.

Between 1990 and 2000, the median value of owner-occupied housing went up 54 percent in Bellevue and 75 percent in the county as a whole. Still, housing values in 2000 were much higher in Bellevue than in the county as a whole. In 2000, Bellevue had the highest median value of King County and Central Puget Sound cities with populations over 35,000.

In the 1990s, monthly housing costs in Bellevue and the region went up more quickly than inflation did.

After adjusting for inflation, median monthly owner cost in Bellevue went up 23 percent between 1990 and 2000, while median gross rent went up 6 percent during the same period. In 2000, nearly 40 percent of Bellevue householders who rented and 25 percent of Bellevue householders who owned their home paid 30 percent or more of their monthly household income in housing costs.

Comparison between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census revealed significant changes over time in the origin of those who have moved to the city of Bellevue from outside of King County.

For those who had moved to Bellevue from within five years prior to the two most recent Census surveys, year 2000 responses revealed a greater percentage who came from a foreign country than did year 1990 responses. Also, for those who had moved to Bellevue from a state besides Washington within five years prior to each Census, year 2000 responses revealed a greater percentage who came from the eastern half of the country than did year 1990 responses.

Transportation

The proportion of employed residents in Bellevue who commuted to work alone decreased between 1990 and 2000.

With the decreased percentages of residents commuting alone in a car came increases in the percent of residents carpooling, riding public transit to work, and working at home. The reduction in single-occupancy-vehicle commuting seen in Bellevue, and also in King County and the states of Oregon and Washington, defied national trends.

Median commute times stayed relatively stable in Bellevue between 1990 and 2000.

This is somewhat surprising given the general acknowledgement that traffic congestion has worsened throughout the region. Several factors likely contributed to stabilization of average commute times in Bellevue. These include increased job opportunities on the Eastside for Eastside residents, and an increased number of Bellevue residents carpooling or working at home. A greater percentage of workers may also have made shifts in the location of their jobs or residences to reduce their commute times.